

Surprise!

It Resulted In
Another One

By CLARISSA MACKIE

A succession of darkly wrapped forms scudded up the snowy path to Mrs. Peter Weldrake's side door and disappeared within a brief glimpse of ruddy lighted room. Each time the door opened to admit another arrival there were much laughter and noisy conversation before the door became a dark blank again.

"Everybody here?" demanded Mrs. Weldrake, emerging from her kitchen, large, beetle browed and commanding of aspect. She was dressed in a stiff, black tulle skirt of generous width and a white lawn waist. She wore a large white apron, and as she came into the sitting room there hovered about her a defined odor of freshly made coffee and recently fried doughnuts.

"Everybody here?" she repeated, reviewing the chattering groups of women and the awkward men hovering about the door.

"All except Althea Laden and her mother," spoke up a young girl. "They oughter been here by this time. I saw them drive away from their house long before we left."

There was an embarrassed silence before Mrs. Weldrake answered: "Well, we needn't wait for Althea Laden and her mother. They ain't coming." She vanished into the kitchen.

"Not coming?" asked the girl who had spoken before.

"They wasn't asked," whispered a woman guardedly.

"Not asked?" echoed the girl.

"Isn't likely, is it?" giggled a woman with a nod of her head toward the kitchen door, and the girl, glancing at Mrs. Weldrake's daughter, Stella, nodded understandingly.

"Althea Laden wasn't asked, to the minister's surprise." The words ran around in low murmured disapproval for Althea and her mother were village favorites, and the invariable "Why?" and its answer followed. All of the women already knew that the Ladens had not been invited, but under the stern injunction of Mrs. Weldrake none had dared to break the seal of secrecy imposed upon the especially invited, for this surprise on the bachelor minister of Thornville had found its inception in the brain of matchmaking Mrs. Weldrake, and Althea Laden was not to be invited. Fat, good natured Stella Weldrake and pretty Althea Laden had always been warm friends, and according to Stella's discriminating parent that stout, amiable damsel was quite outwitted by Althea's more delicate charms; hence this surprise party, from which the Ladens were omitted and where Stella was expected to shine undimmed and perchance capture the minister's unsuspecting heart.

"It's 9 o'clock," announced Mrs. Weldrake, bustling into the sitting room arrayed in warm shawls and with a knitted "fascinator" over her iron gray hair. "I guess we better be going. I see a lamp lighted in Mr. Whitney's study." She lifted a window curtain and peered across the snowy fields toward the parsonage. "He don't suspect a thing."

"And, so far as I know, nobody else outside this room knows about the surprise," added Mrs. Dora Hatch triumphantly as the party trooped forth, each one bearing burdens of toothsome vianda. Big Peter Weldrake brought up the rear with a steaming can of coffee.

The surprise party crackled across the snow with much smothered laughter mingled with deference as they approached the parsonage from the path across the fields.

A green shaded lamp beamed from the study window, but there was no sign of the minister's dark, well shaped head outlined against the bookcases.

"He's stepped out a minute," breathed Mrs. Weldrake hoarsely. "Most likely he's locking the door after Jennie Plumb. That's why I waited till 9 o'clock, after she'd got the dishes done. She's mortal slow."

"There she goes now!"

The group stood huddled by the back porch watching the bulky form of the black woman who came in by the day to "do" the minister's housework. When Jennie Plumb had tramped out of sight the surprise party tiptoed carefully around the path to the front door, Mrs. Weldrake leading and her husband bringing up the rear.

A dim light burned in the hall, but save for a green glimmer from the study beyond the parlors were quite dark. Mrs. Weldrake rang the bell once, twice, three times, without response.

"I guess Mr. Whitney ain't home," whispered a doubtful voice.

"That's all the better," snapped back Mrs. Weldrake, trying the doorknob. "This door's unlocked, and we can go right in and give him the surprise of his life."

The women heaped their wraps in the hall in the manner of those who were accustomed to the business of surprising unsuspecting persons in their homes and bore their bundles of refreshments kitchenward, their mouths rounded to shout "Surprise!" at the hapless minister if he should prove to be in the house after all and should come upon them unexpectedly.

The men, feeling some compunction at this invasion, hung awkwardly

about the front door as if ready to make a sudden exit in case disaster should overtake their more intrepid women folk. They might understand and enter into a surprise party upon one of the laity, but this encroachment upon the minister's privacy was more novel than enjoyable.

Dora Hatch had flitted from room to room and returned to announce that there wasn't a soul in the house, but that Jennie Plumb was outshining herself as a housekeeper, for the whole house was in apple pie order. "Even flowers in every room—carnations at 50 cents a dozen from the city," she ended.

"You don't suppose he suspected, do you?" asked Stella, who looked like a big pink and white baby in a white muslin gown with blue ribbons.

"I don't know who could have told him," said Mrs. Weldrake decisively from her executive position before the kitchen range. "I don't believe anybody would be mean enough to tell about it."

The fifteen women vociferated their innocence from tale telling, and those who were married exonerated their husbands, and those who were yet unborn defended their sweethearts. Stella Weldrake looked troubled for a brief instant and then shook off whatever oppressed her mind and smiled across the room at Timothy Weed, who had peered bashfully in at the door.

Timothy blushed and drew back, but he had answered Stella's smile with a very betraying one, if any one had seen it.

Mrs. Weldrake blew out the light in the kitchen, and ushered the surprisers into the back parlor.

"Now, all sit around as quiet as mice, and when he comes into the front hall the boys will light the lamps and all the rest of us can holler 'Surprise!' and I guess he will be surprised. It was pretty good luck having him step off down street just at this time." Mrs. Weldrake was feeling satisfied with herself and the result of her planning. She had maneuvered the men out of the front hall, out of their overcoats, relieved them of their hats and marshaled them into the back parlor. Several of them were stationed with matches held ready to strike at the critical moment so that the full nature of the surprise might be revealed to the astonished and delighted minister on his return.

All at once there came the sound of sleighbells that stopped before the door.

The front door opened and closed gingerly. Then the three lamps were simultaneously lighted, and thirty voices screamed "Surprise!" at the thoroughly surprised minister.

If Mr. Whitney was surprised the owners of the thirty voices were equally astonished, for their cries died on their lips, and they stood staring foolishly at the minister and his companion, Althea Laden, who had not been invited to the party. Althea stood in the doorway looking very lovely in a long pale gray cloak, beneath which shined a white dress. There were white flowers in her golden hair and on her breast. She looked like a bride, and it suddenly dawned upon the surprisers' party that Althea Laden was a bride. Nobody looked at Mrs. Peter Weldrake.

Mr. Whitney recovered his self possession and stepped forward. There was a look of serene happiness on his fine face, and his dark eyes glowed warmly as he thanked them.

"My friends, it seems that my marriage to Miss Laden has become known to you, and out of the warmth of your hearts you have come to bid her welcome as my wife. I shall ever remember this occasion with the greatest joy."

"Married?" interrupted Mrs. Weldrake, arising with a magisterial air from the chair into which she had fallen at the first shock of the surprise that had come to her share.

Mr. Whitney smiled and reddened and went on with his little speech of thanks, unconsciously stripping the surprise party of its motive and viewing it in the light of a carefully prepared welcome for himself and his bride. He explained that a public marriage would have been in order at a later date had not Mrs. Laden been summoned that very morning to the bedside of a dying relative in the west and he had urged an immediate marriage with Althea, who was to be left behind. They had all driven over to Mendville and been married by a minister there and had then seen Mrs. Laden off on her western journey.

"The bride cake must come later," he ended with a smile.

Of course they all came forward and kissed Althea and congratulated the minister. They were heartily glad of the marriage, for Althea was a favorite, and it was something of a distinction to be one of a surprise party that had turned into a wedding party.

Mrs. Weldrake held herself well in hand, brushed Althea's cheek with her lips, majestically accepted their thanks as the organizer of the party and led the bery of ladies who were to serve refreshments.

As they made their way homeward that evening Mrs. Weldrake felt a strange sense of defeat. The minister's brief interest in Stella had been her only hope that that babyish girl would ever be married. Her husband trudged beside her, swinging the empty coffee can. Stella was walking in the rear with Timothy Weed.

At the front door the Weldrakes turned and looked back.

Young Timothy Weed had his arm around Stella's capacious waist.

"I guess you'll have a wedding on your hands after all before spring, ma," chuckled her husband as they went inside.

And Mrs. Weldrake blushed that he had understood her scheming, but she felt strangely comforted.



G. W. Dickinson, General Manager of the Michigan State Fair.

ABOUT thirty-one years ago the shrill warning shriek of No. 6 as she rounded the bend caused a robust, overalled boy who had been engaged in the occupation of trailing Old Dobbin up and down endless rows of evergreen to desist in his exciting task until the steel steed galloped around the curve.

As this was a bit too early for the advent of the Empire theater, with its new and exclusive wild west film (approved by the national board of censorship—last five rows reserved for ladies who do not wish to remove their hats), there was nothing for the boy to do that night except to become uneasy and dissatisfied with his lot. Before he took the candle up to bed he had decided on his course. He would be a railroad man. He hadn't quite made up his mind whether he wanted to be a superintendent or general manager, but that could be decided on later.

Seven years have passed, and that boy, now a young man, is an expert telegraph operator. He is directing the course of those steel fliers he used to so fondly view from the cornfield.

He soon got so he knew the business so thoroughly that a Michigan railroad corporation thought he would make a crackerjack superintendent of its road. He did.

When Governor Warner was casting around for a competent state railroad commissioner he hit upon a practical man for the job—George W. Dickinson. He justified the governor's confidence.

Recently the Michigan State Agricultural Society concluded that it wanted a man at the head of the Michigan State Fair who was able to substitute a little efficiency for haphazard management. The fair needed an expert business doctor. One of its directors and an ardent enthusiast, George W. Dickinson, was prevailed upon to accept the thankless job.

Those same forceful methods which enabled George Dickinson to rise out of the obscurity of a Sanilac county farm to emphatic success in the business world are already manifesting themselves in the general management of the Michigan State Fair.



Albert H. Moore, Race Secretary of the Michigan State Fair.

EVER since state fairs have been held in Michigan harness racing has been one of the main attractions. Appreciating the interest of the country and city people in the contests furnished by trotters and pacers, the management of the Michigan State Fair determined to make the attraction as good as possible; therefore membership was secured in the Grand Circuit, and during the week of Sept. 15 all of the famous drivers and the equine champions will be at the big track for the entertainment of the fair goers.

Detroit is the only city which gives two Grand Circuit meetings. Its blue ribbon trots long have been famous, and for years they were spoken of as the greatest, but now they have a rival in the State Fair races. In addition to the horses that will perform at the midsummer meeting will be innumerable recruits from the west and north, this meeting being the grand roundup before the closing chapters at Columbus and Lexington.

The State Fair will give close to \$40,000 for the trotters and pacers, the feature being the Michigan stake of \$10,000 for 2:15 trotters, which has the honor of having attracted the biggest field of any of the classics. In this stake are named forty-five horses, so that with the weeding out process enough should be left to make it a grand contest.

Second in importance is the 2:12 pace for \$5,000, and this has twenty-five entries. The 2:05 pace has seventeen and the 2:10 pace twenty-three, the average being greater than that in any other Grand Circuit city.

In addition to these, there will be sixteen late closing classes with purses of not less than \$1,000, and the first Futurity of the Michigan Trotting Horse Breeders' Association will be raced. This last named event will bring together the best three-year-olds in the state and is of interest in all sections, as there are about forty eligibles.

The State Fair races will be conducted on the highest plane, as Frank B. Walker is to do the starting and A. J. Keating will be presiding judge. At that time of the year the horses are in shape to step fastest, and it is likely that the time of the events will be very fast, as the class of the animals this year is unusually good.

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Commissioners Notice.

In the matter of the estate of Edward G.

Hamblin, deceased.

We the undersigned, having been appointed

by the Hon. Matthew Bush, Judge of Probate

in and for the County of Shiawassee, to

Michigan, Commissioners to receive, examine

and adjust all claims and demands of all

persons against said estate, do hereby give notice,

that we will meet at the City of Owasco,

Savings Bank in the City of Owasco, in said

County on Monday the 17th day of July, A. D.

1913, and on Monday the 24th day of August,

A. D. 1913 at ten o'clock in the forenoon of each

of said days, for the purpose of receiving and

adjusting all claims against said estate, and

that four months from the 6th day of May

A. D. 1913 are allowed to creditors to present

their claims to said Commissioners for adjust-

ment and allowance.

Dated the 6th day of May A. D. 1913.

M. BENTLEY,

G. L. TAYLOR,

Commissioners.

STATE OF MICHIGAN—The Circuit Court

for the County of Shiawassee, in Chancery.

Thirty-fifth Judicial Circuit, in Chancery.

In the matter of the petition of Henry Ste-

vens, William A. Stevens, Alton Russell and

Scott Russell for the dissolution of Hund-

Stevens Company, a Corporation.

Suit pending in the Circuit Court in the

County of Shiawassee, in Chancery. Decease

me the Honorable Selden A. Minter, Circuit

Judge, at his chambers in the City of Owasco,

in the County of Shiawassee, in said Judicial

Circuit on the 22nd day of April, A. D. 1913.

In this cause on reading and filing the peti-

tion duly verified, of Henry Stevens, William

A. Stevens, Alton Russell and Scott Russell,

the above named petitioners, and on motion of

George E. Pardee, Esq., of counsel for the said

petitioners it is ordered that all persons inter-

ested in said Hund-Stevens Company, a cor-

poration, show cause if any they have, why

such corporation should not be dissolved, and

why the prayer of said petition should not be

granted, before Neil R. Walsh, a Circuit Court

Commissioner for said County of Shiawassee,

on the 26th day of July, A. D. 1913, at ten o'clock

in the forenoon at his office in the City of

Owasco, Shiawassee County, Michigan.

And it is further ordered that notice of the

contents of this order be published in each

week for three weeks successively in The

Owasco Times, a newspaper published in the

County where the principal place of business

of the business of said corporation is situated.

SALDEN S. MINER,

Circuit Judge.

Geo. E. PARDEE, Attorney for Petitioners.

Business Address, Owasco, Mich.

Notice of Mortgage Sale.

Whereas default has been made in the pay-

ment of the money secured by a mortgage bear-

ing date the 7th day of October in the year

1908, executed by Frank R. Scofield and Grace

A. Scofield, his wife, of Shiawassee County,

Shiawassee County, Michigan, to Wilmet W.

Berry, Sr., deceased, late of the same place,

which said mortgage was duly recorded in the

Register of Deeds of the County of Shiawassee

and State of Michigan in Liber 116

of mortgages on page 60 on or about the 1st day

of December 1909 at three o'clock p. m., and

whereas, the amount claimed to be due on said

mortgage at the date of this notice is the sum

of \$162.50, the principal and interest, and a

further sum of \$20.00 as attorney fees and cost

for said mortgage, and the whole amount

claimed to be unpaid on said mortgage is the

sum of \$182.50 and no suit or proceedings have

been instituted at law to recover the debt

now remaining secured by said mortgage, or

any part thereof whereby the power of sale

contained in said mortgage has become oper-

ative; and whereas, the undersigned has been

duely and legally appointed by the Probate

Court for the said County of Shiawassee ad-

ministrator of said estate of Wilmet W. Berry,

Sr., deceased, and has duly qualified as such;

Now, therefore, notice is hereby given that

in virtue of the said power of sale and in pur-

suance of the statute in such case made and

provided the said mortgage will be foreclosed

by the sale of the premises thereon described

at public auction to the high bidder at the

front door of the Court House in the City of

Corunna in said County of Shiawassee and

State of Michigan upon Tuesday, the 26th day

of August A. D. 1913, at ten o'clock in the fore-

noon of that day; which said mortgage is de-

scribed in said mortgage as follows, to-wit:

The southeast one-quarter (1/4) of the south-

east one-quarter (1/4) of section number four-

teen (14) town six (6) north, range one (1) east,

Michigan, containing forty acres of land more

or less.

Dated May 7th, 1913.

WALTER W. BERRY,

Administrator of the estate of Wilmet W.

Berry, Sr., deceased, Mortgagee.

PULVER & POND

Attorneys for Administrator of the estate of

Mortgagee.

Business address: Owasco, Michigan.

Order of Publication.

State of Michigan, the Probate Court for the

County of Shiawassee.

At a session of the Probate Court for the

County of Shiawassee held at the Probate Office,

in the City of Corunna on the 22nd day of May, A. D.

1913.

Present, Matthew Bush, Judge of Probate.

In the matter of the estate of James Ellis

deceased.

On filing the petition of Nelly Helen Ellis

praying for the probate of the will of said de-

ceased now filed in this Court.

It is ordered that the 22nd day of June

next, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, at said

Probate Office, be appointed for hearing said

petition.

And it is further ordered that a copy of this

order be published three successive weeks

previous to said day of hearing in the Owasco

Times a newspaper printed and circulating in

said County of Shiawassee.

MATTHEW BUSH,

Judge of Probate.

By FLORENCE LIND